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## Letter dated 11 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

The present letter is submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 2137 (2014), by which I was requested to establish an electoral observer mission to follow and report on the electoral process in Burundi and to report on the work of that mission to the Council before, during and after the elections in 2015.

Since the establishment of the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) on 1 January 2015, the Security Council has been briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and by my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region at various stages of the process.

As the Security Council is aware, the political and security environment in Burundi has deteriorated significantly, putting MENUB under significant pressure. Pursuant to Council resolution 2137 (2014), MENUB was conceived as a team of 88 personnel (including a 39-strong mission support element) to follow and report on the electoral process.

Political tensions have been on the rise since the announcement on 25 April that the current President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, would run for a third term, a position that many within his party, the political opposition and civil society consider constitutionally questionable. Against the backdrop of violent confrontations between the police and opponents of the incumbent's bid, a coup d'état was attempted on 13 May, increasing the level of political instability and the prospects for large-scale violence and human rights violations. At least 40 people have been killed, hundreds have been injured and more than 90,000 Burundians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

To address this situation, I sent my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region to Burundi. He has been spearheading diplomatic initiatives in Bujumbura since his arrival there on 25 April. Working closely with regional partners, he has been facilitating a consultative political dialogue among Burundian stakeholders to build consensus on the measures necessary to create an environment conducive to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

Following the recent decision by the Heads of State of the East African Community at an emergency summit on 31 May, in which, among other things, my Special Envoy was urged to continue the political dialogue and a call was made for a postponement of the elections for a period of not less than one and a half months, MENUB will need to play an even more prominent and robust role in supporting credible elections. This will probably include, as has been discussed in the



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consultative political dialogue that my Special Envoy has been facilitating, providing enhanced observer coverage to reassure parties and other stakeholders. Although the dialogue is currently stalled, the requirements outlined below remain essential. There are, at present, no other international observer missions deployed in Burundi.

To ensure that it can perform its mandated responsibilities and meet the increased obligations that will accompany any eventual political agreement, MENUB urgently needs to increase its operational capacity on the ground along two main lines:

(a) Strengthening its electoral observation capacity;

(b) Enhancing its operational support capacity to deliver administrative, logistical and security support to the reinforced mission.

In particular, surge capacity is needed between mid-June and mid-September to coincide with the expected revised electoral calendar. I intend to seek additional staffing positions for MENUB, including more long-term electoral observers and additional security staff.

Various funding sources are being examined to meet the immediate and evolving needs on the ground. In the meantime, MENUB will manage its existing resources as flexibly as possible to meet the new requirements.

I count on the support of the Security Council to strengthen MENUB.

I should be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon